

Conservation Connections



St. Louis Regional Newsletter

Missouri Department of Conservation

July 2011

Late Summer Shorebirds

by Adam Jones, MDC Wildlife Biologist

Traditionally wetlands have been known for great wildlife viewing during spring and fall waterfowl migrations. As an outdoorsman myself, it's hard to think of a time I would rather be in the marsh than on a cold November morning. However, there are some other great times during the year to see some very brief visitors to Missouri.

Shorebirds migrate through Missouri late in the spring, and then again during late summer and early fall. These long distance migrants rarely waste time, as they have some of the longest migration routes on the continent. During their migrations they stop to forage on aquatic insects to fuel the next leg of their flights. As wetland managers, we can improve the efficiency of these species feeding behaviors and provide some key migration foraging areas.

During peak migration times of year, small water level changes can create optimal foraging areas. When the water level drops, aquatic invertebrates are concentrated on the edge of the pool due to the receding water line. Consequently, semi-permanent water areas are great places to provide some foraging habitat in late summer. Each species of shorebird is specifically adapted to a certain

water depth by the length of their legs and the shape of their bill. To view most species, look around the shoreline and in areas up to about 6 inches in water depth. Find some areas like this in your local marsh and you may be lucky enough to spot some migratory species you haven't seen before.

Fairly common shorebird migrants through Missouri include killdeer, lesser yellowlegs, and pectoral sandpipers. However, there are others that you may need to pull out your field guides to identify. Species such as black-necked stilts, willets, and glossy ibis are more rarely seen and very visually striking. These shorebirds typically peak in Missouri sometime during the month of August, but that can depend on weather conditions. It is definitely worth the trip to view these birds that most have only seen by flipping through their field guides.



“Species such as black-necked stilts... are more rarely seen and very visually striking.”

Columbia Bottom Conservation Area

July 2011

801 Strodtman Road, St. Louis, MO 63138 Office hours are Wednesday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Saturday - Sunday from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

For reservations call (314) 877- 6014 Wednesday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-270 north take the Riverview Drive exit (last Missouri exit); go north approximately 2.8 miles. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road. The entrance is on the right-hand side.

Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom

9 Gentle Hikes

Saturday 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.

(All Ages) If you love the outdoors and time or mobility is an issue, we've got the "hike" for you. This summer, on the second Saturday of July and August, our Naturalist will offer a short and gentle walk so you can visit Columbia Bottom at your own pace. Meet at the Visitor Center. (Reservations are not required.)

9 The Naturalist Is In

Saturday 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

(All Ages) The Naturalist is in! Just in case you have a question, our Naturalist is in to help you find the answer. Stop by on the second Saturday of July and August. (Reservations are not required.)

13 Natural Art:

Woodburning & Painting

Wednesday 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

(Ages 12 & up) Unleash your creative side as you make your own natural art out of river driftwood. Join us to scout for your unique canvas and turn it into something imaginative. Wood burners

and paints will be provided. Bring a friend and beat the heat for this relaxing artistic opportunity. It's just one more way we help you discover nature. (Reservations begin June 29.)

16 Tots on the Trail: Get Down & Dirty

Saturday 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 2 - 6) This month we will go a little off the trail to explore the creatures in and on the soil. Become a dirt detective to discover why these tiny beings are important to us. Did you know the little creatures make new soil and add air to the soil? We will also examine what happens to the soil when it rains. Be prepared to get messy. Meet at the Boat Ramp Pavilion. (Reservations begin July 2.)

16 Moonlit Mile Hike

Saturday 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

(Ages 7 & up) Would you like to feel a cool breeze off the river as the bright light of the sun goes down? Walk with us along the prairie beside the

wetlands, past the forest to the river for a sensational evening of changing colors in the sky. We might even hear music as we listen for owls hooting, ducks flapping, frogs croaking, fish jumping, and coyotes howling. (Reservations begin July 2.)

28 Ladybug Fly Away

Thursday 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 5 & up) Did you know ladybugs are big time hunters? They go through metamorphosis too! Find out how these helpful beetles make farmers and gardeners so happy, and learn how interesting their lives can be as we explore their world through stories and crafts. (Reservations begin July 14.)



Forest Park Office

5595 Grand Drive, St. Louis, MO 63112 Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For reservations call (314) 877-1309 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Kingshighway north to West Pine Boulevard, turn left. Follow West Pine to Lindell, turn left onto Lindell. Continue on Lindell past Union Drive to Cricket, turn left. Take first available right onto Grand Drive. The Visitors Center is the tan brick, red tile-roofed building with arched windows, and a clock tower. It will be on the right side of the street. Free parking is available in the double lot to the left or on the street.

22 Discover Nature Families: Orienteering

Friday 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(Ages 8 & up) Learn to navigate your way through Forest Park using the old school method of a map and compass. This program will take you from compass basics, setting and taking a bearing, to eventually following and developing an orienteering course. Join the fun of learning a new outdoor skill while you discover nature. Bring your water bottle, dress for the weather, and join us at the Dennis and Judith Jones Visitor & Education Center. (Reservations begin July 1.)



July 2011

August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 2 miles. The area entrance is on the north side of Hwy D. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/busch

12 Aquatic Adventure

Tuesday 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

(Ages 6 - 12) What could be more fun in early July than to see the cool things that live in an aquatic habitat? Come learn about an aquatic food chain and how we can affect it. Also learn which conservation practices can help enhance the health of an aquatic environment. There will be plenty of time to see what neat critters are prey and predators in such an environment. Dress appropriately for the weather and for netting aquatic critters along the shore of the Busch Refuge Lake. All necessary equipment will be provided. (Reservations begin June 28.)



23 Snakes of Missouri

Saturday 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

(Families) Join us to discover the snakes of Missouri. We'll discuss the types of venomous snakes that live in Missouri and how to identify them. Learn lots of interesting facts about these reptiles! (Reservations begin July 11.)

30 Herons and Egrets

Saturday 7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

(Adults) Join us for a 2.5-mile hike at Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area to view some of the showiest of all wading birds – herons and egrets. The young have just left the nests, so we may see both young and adults feeding together. Learn to identify these birds through spotting scopes provided by the Missouri Department of Conservation. (Reservations begin July 18.)



Discover Nature – Families: Canoeing & Fishing The Meramec River

Three separate float opportunities, only one float per family:

July 15, 22 or 29

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

(Ages 10 & up) Nothing beats a summer float trip! Better yet, nothing beats a summer float with a group of naturalists to help guide and discover nature on the river! Join us for a float trip on the Meramec River near Eureka, MO, between Pacific Palisades Conservation Area and the Allenton Access. This 7 mile stretch of river is full of fascinating nature to explore and discover. We'll learn about aquatic ecosystems, flooding, erosion events, how wildlife survive in a changing river world and the role that we all can play in protecting our aquatic resources. All participants must be good swimmers and have at least one participant over 18 years of age per canoe. Please also be prepared with snacks, lunch, water and sun protection. Pre-float instructions will be provided once registered. (Reservations begin July 1.)



Rockwoods Reservation

July 2011

2751 Glencoe Road, Wildwood, MO 63038 Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 458-2236 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

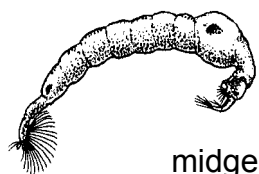
If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Hwy 109 north 4 miles to Woods Avenue; left on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road. From Manchester Road take Hwy 109 south 2 miles to Woods Avenue; right on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road.

Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/regions/st-louis/rockwoods-reservation>

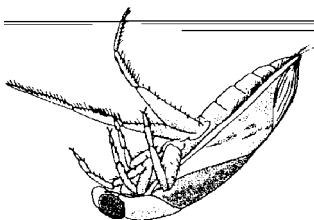
7 Aquatic Adventure

Thursday 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

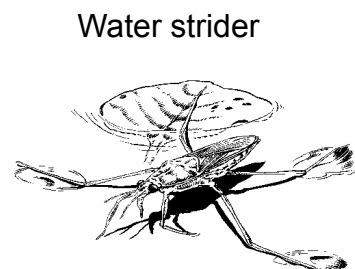
(Ages 6 -12) What could be more fun in early July than to see the cool things that live in an aquatic habitat? Come learn about an aquatic food chain and how we can affect it. Also learn which conservation practices can help enhance the health of an aquatic environment. There will be plenty of time to see what neat critters are prey and predators in such an environment. Dress appropriately for the weather and for netting aquatic critters along the shore of the Rockwoods woodland pond. All necessary equipment will be provided. (Reservations begin June 23.)



midge



water boatman



Water strider



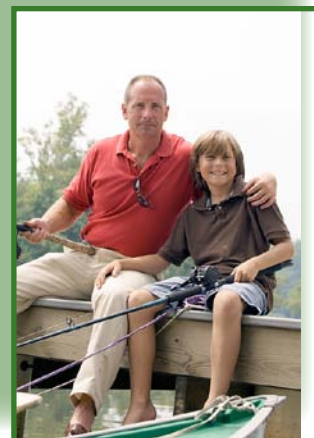
Discover Nature Families: Canoeing & Fishing The Meramec River

Three separate float opportunities, only one float per family:

July 14, 21 or 28

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

(Ages 10 & up) Nothing beats a summer float trip! Better yet, nothing beats a summer float with a group of naturalists to help guide and discover nature on the river! Join us for a float trip on the Meramec River near Eureka, MO, between Pacific Palisades Conservation Area and the Allenton Access. This 7 mile stretch of river is full of fascinating nature to explore and discover. We'll learn about aquatic ecosystems, flooding, erosion events, how wildlife survive in a changing river world and the role that we all can play in protecting our aquatic resources. All participants must be good swimmers and have at least one participant over 18 years of age per canoe. Please also be prepared with snacks, lunch, water and sun protection. Pre-float instructions will be provided once registered. (Reservations begin July 1.)



This publication is produced locally. Please e-mail us at ConservationConnections@mdc.mo.gov with questions, comments, or concerns. Thank you.

Busch Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

July 2011

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304

Hours are: December 1 - March 31 open Monday, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

April 1 - November 30 open Monday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., and Tuesday from 2 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Closed all State and Federal Holidays.

For program reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 5 miles. The area entrance is on the south side of Hwy D. Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/busch>

4 Holiday Observed - Range Closed

6, 7, 9 Basic Handgun

Wednesday 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. &

Thursday 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. or

Saturday 7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

(Ages 13 & up) This program is designed to teach students how to safely handle and shoot a handgun. We will cover topics such as various actions, calibers, grip, stance, sight picture and safety. The first part of the class will be held in the classrooms at Busch CA Headquarters on Wednesday. Then half the class will go to the shooting range Thursday evening and the other half will go Saturday morning for some hands-on experience. You can bring your own equipment or use ours.

(Reservations begin June 6.)



13, 14, Basic Skeet

Wednesday, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. &

Thursday 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(Ages 14 & up) Join us to learn about the exciting sport of skeet shooting. We will cover the rules of American Skeet and offer tips & techniques for skill level improvement. This is not a basic shotgun program, you should already know how to safely handle and shoot a shotgun. The first evening of this program will be held in the classroom at Busch CA Headquarters, and the second evening will be held at Busch Shooting Range for some hands-on experience with our instructors. Participants 14-17 need to be accompanied by an adult. You may bring your own shotgun or we will have some available for use. (Reservations begin June 13.)



20 Firearms Care & Cleaning

Tuesday 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(Ages 13 & up) One of the most important aspects of having firearms and being responsible is making sure your firearm is maintained and in good working condition. We will discuss the supplies and equipment and how to properly dismantle and maintain your firearms. We will also go over the various techniques needed to clean different types of firearms. After a discussion, we will have stations set up for some hands-on experience. We will clean pistols, shotguns and rifles.

(Reservations begin June 20.)

For a complete listing of all Hunter Education and Bowhunter Education classes throughout the region, visit the web at www.mdc.mo.gov and click on the "Hunter Education" link on the right of the page.

Jay Henges Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

July 2011

1100 Antire Road, High Ridge, MO 63049

Range Hours: May 1 - August 31: Wednesday 1 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Thursday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

September 1 - April 30: Wednesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays and all State and Federal Holidays.

For program reservations call (636) 938-9548 Wednesday through Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From the east/St. Louis: I-44 west to Beaumont/Antire Road, exit 269. Left over I-44 to Antire Road. Right on Antire road. One hundred feet to entrance. Left into driveway. From the west/Eureka: I-44 east to Beaumont/Antire Road, exit 269. Follow exit lane around to top.

Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/henges>

9 Youth .22 Rifle

Saturday 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

(Ages 9 - 13) Interested young people who have never had experience shooting .22 rifles are invited to participate in a Saturday morning session learning safety and the proper techniques of shooting .22 rimfire rifles. Firearms, ammunition, and safety equipment are provided. (Reservations begin June 9.)

11 & 12 Discover Hunting – Youth Hunting Skills Camp

Monday and Tuesday 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(Ages 11 - 15) A fun, two-evening camp setting designed to help youth learn and improve shooting and hunting skills, including rifle, shotgun, game calling, game identification, and more. We will provide an evening camp meal, but participants may have to cook it first! (Reservations begin June 11.)

13 Trigger Time – Handgun

Wednesday 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

(Ages 18 & up) Trigger Time is "hands-on" personal instruction designed to make you a better marksman. There is no classroom time, just expert one-on-one instruction from one of our staff. The instructor will observe shooting by each individual participant offering suggestions on grip, stance, trigger-pull, sight alignment. Participants will be required to provide their own handguns and ammunition (at least 50 rounds). (Reservations begin June 13.)

19 - 21 Bowhunter Education

Tuesday, Wednesday &

Thursday 5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

(Ages 11 & up) This certification meets the requirement for states that mandate Bowhunter Education in order to purchase a bowhunting permit. This 3-part program includes bowhunting equipment, hunt preparation, shot placement, trailing and recovery techniques, and tree stand set up and safety. Reservations can be made online at: <http://my.register-ed.com/event/studentchooseevent>, or call 636-938-9548.

23 Discover Hunting: Youth Introduction to Shotgun

Saturday 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.

(Ages 10 - 16) This program will introduce young people to the basics of shooting a shotgun. We will use 20 gauge shotguns with low noise and low recoil ammunition. Shooters should be at least 90 lbs. weight. (Reservations begin on June 23.)



25 & 26 Basics of the Modern Sporting Rifle

Monday & Tuesday 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(Ages 18 & up) This course is designed to provide beginners with a hands-on introduction to the safe handling and proper techniques of modern sporting rifle shooting. This course includes classroom and range time. Students will learn rules for safe gun handling at home, in the field and on the range,

rifle actions, parts and operation, ammunition, shooting fundamentals, cleaning the rifle, and continuing opportunities for developing rifle skills. (Reservations begin June 25.)

27 How to Shoot Sporting Clays

Wednesday 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

(Ages 16 & up) Using our sporting clays trailer, and several remote trap machines, we'll create an interesting sporting clays course with individual instruction from our coaching staff. Participants will provide semi-automatic or over-and-under 12 gauge shotgun. (Reservations begin June 27.)

28 & 30 Womens' Basic Handgun

Thursday 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

(Ages 16 & up) This two-part program will include handgun operation, shooting fundamentals, safety, maintenance, and safe storage. A classroom session on Thursday evening, then a live-fire session on Saturday morning. Although equipment and ammunition will be provided, you may bring your own. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. (Reservations begin June 28.)

30 Womens' Basic Shotgun

Saturday 1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

(Ages 16 & up) Join us for an introductory program shooting shotguns. We will cover proper gun selection, fit, ammunition choices, and shooting accessories. After a classroom session, we'll move to the trap field for time to practice what we've learned. (Reservations begin June 30.)

Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

July 2011

11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122

Building hours: Tuesday through Saturday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday and Monday: Closed

Area and trails: Open seven days a week 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. during Central Standard Time and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. during Daylight Saving Time.

9 Discover Nature

Families:

Fishing at Forest Park

Saturday 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

(Ages 8 & up) The naturalists want to go fishing, and because we don't have a fishing pond at Powder Valley, we're going to Forest

Park! Learn how to cast, bait a hook, and catch a fish! Please dress for the weather. All fishing equipment and bait will be provided. We will meet at the Forest Park Hatchery Lakes, located at the northeast corner of the park. To get there, take Hwy 64 to Kingshighway north, make a left on West Pine, and then the first left onto Grand Drive. The hatcheries will be on the right. (Reservations begin June 25.)

15 Movie Night featuring *Fly Away Home*

Friday 8 - 10 p.m.

(All ages) Join us outdoors for a showing of the 1996 Academy Award-Nominated film *Fly Away Home* starring Jeff Daniels and Anna Paquin. "The soaring adventure of a 13-year-old girl and her estranged father, who learn what family is all about when they adopt an orphaned flock of geese and teach them to fly!"

Bring your family and friends, lawn chairs or blankets, and bug spray. We'll watch the movie outside under the stars. Popcorn and lemonade will be available. This movie night is free and open to all. If it rains, the movie will be shown in the auditorium. (Reservations ongoing.)



19 Lovable Ladybugs

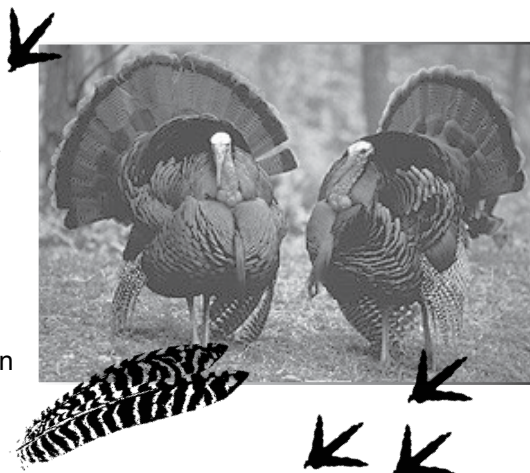
Tuesday 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.

(Ages 4 & up) Did you know that pretty little ladybugs are good friends to gardeners? Although they are gentle with people, ladybugs are fierce hunters of the tiny aphids that harm plants. Come help us celebrate these lovable little predators with activities and crafts. (Reservations begin July 5.)

12 Let's Talk Turkey

Tuesday 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 6 & up) From almost zero to half a million! The road to recovery for Missouri turkeys was a long and tough journey. As you walk in the woods today you may see turkey tracks or scat, but it wasn't always that way. Let's celebrate the return of the wild turkey with stories, games, activities, and crafts to learn about these interesting and unique birds. Then we'll go outside and look for turkeys or their sign. (Reservations begin June 28.)



22 Discover Nature

Women: Fishing at Forest Park

Friday 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

(Ages 14 & up, 14 -17 with a registered adult) Let's go fishing at Forest Park, ladies! Learn to cast, bait a hook, and catch

a fish! We'll also do some dipping in the wetland to discover the world of macro- invertebrates, and then finish the program with a fish fry. The entire program will be outside, so please dress for the weather. All fishing equipment, bait, and food for lunch will be provided. We will meet at the Forest Park Hatchery Lakes, located at the northeast corner of the park. To get there, take Hwy 64 to Kingshighway north, make a left on West Pine, and then the first left onto Grand Drive. The hatcheries will be on the right. (Reservations begin July 8.)



Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

For reservations call (314) 301-1500

July 2011

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with five days notice. From I-44 take Lindbergh (Route 61/67) to Watson Road. Go west on Watson Road to Geyer Road. Go north on Geyer Road to Cragwold Road then one mile west on Cragwold Road. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder

Powder Valley Hallway Exhibit

During the month of July, we are fortunate to have a photography display by two of our Missouri Department of Conservation foresters.

Perry Eckhardt, Urban forester, has spent the last nine years working on various urban natural resource issues for MDC. A native of Oklahoma, Perry uses his camera as a tool to learn Missouri's flora and fauna. As a native plant landscaping advocate and practitioner, he finds plenty to photograph in his own yard. More of Perry's work may be viewed at www.flickr.com/photos/perryeck/



Mark Grueber is a native Missourian and has worked for the Missouri Department of Conservation as an Urban and Community Forester for the last 11 years. "My love for plants and ecology deludes me into thinking that I have some skill as a photographer." Most of Mark's photos were taken in his backyard native woodland garden in Kirkwood, or while hiking or floating through the great state of Missouri. More of Mark's photos can be found at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/forestermark/>

As an added bonus . . .

Darrell DePew has always had a deep appreciation of nature and found creative ways to display his love of wildlife. He experimented with lamps and tables made from shed deer antlers, photography, and most recently – carving turkey feathers. Darrell has been an avid turkey and deer hunter for years but most of all admires the serenity of nature and the wildlife that is abundant in the Midwest.

By day Darrell continues to use his creativity in his trade of floor installation, but in the evenings he can be found working in his small studio at home carving and painting feathers and finding new ways to display his love of nature.

